

LWT woodland condition assessment

Site: Martholme Greenway Recorder(s): John Lamb

Date: 19/05/19

It is important to monitor woodlands to ascertain what condition they are in and whether management targets are being met. The following condition assessment should be carried out for woodland areas every 5 years. If the woodland is linear and has difficult terrain all observations should be made from the boundary looking into the wood - the area of assessment is that which can be seen in front of the assessor with their back towards the nearest external boundary. Using a good scale map walk the site stopping ten times to make assessments. These stops should be marked on the map so that they can be reproduced in later assessments. The stops should be evenly spaced throughout the site (e.g. about 100m between) but can be positioned anywhere.

At each stop record the answers to the following ten questions (see overleaf for stop descriptions and map for their locations):

Extent – Stops 1-5 are in Copy Wood, Stops 6-10 are in Martholme Railway Woodland:

1. Is the area or boundary of the woodland as it should be?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Structure –

2. Can you see mature trees?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y

3. Can you see at least five individual native shrubs or coppice?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

4. Can you see at least a 50% coverage of native ground flora (not including bare ground: bg, and/or non-native flora e.g. Himalayan Balsam: B)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N(bg)

5. Can you see any standing or hung-up deadwood?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

6. Can you see any laying deadwood over 2m long?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Regeneration –

7. Can you see at least five native tree seedlings over 2m tall?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N

Undesirable species (different species can be substituted for those used below) –

8. Is your field of vision free of non-native shrubs (e.g. Rhododendron, laurel)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N ¹	Y	Y	Y	Y

9. Is your field of vision free of unwanted canopy tree species? (S=Sycamore)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Y	Y	N(S)	N(S)	Y	N(S)	N(S)	Y	Y	Y

10. Is your field of vision free of other non-natives? (JK=Japanese Knotweed)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Y	Y	Y ²	Y	N(JK)	N(B)	N(B)	N(B)	Y	Y

¹ Garden Privet (*Ligustrum ovalifolium*). ² Not including the Horse-chestnut on the other side of the fence.

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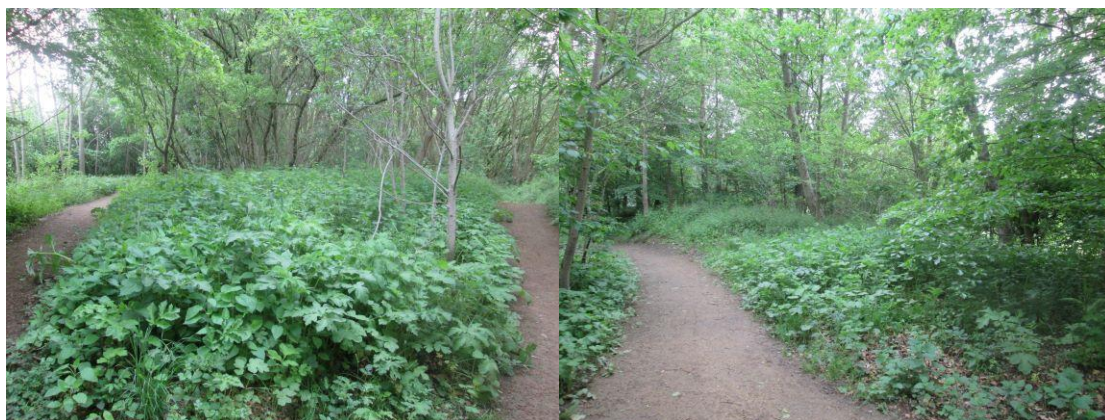
Stops 1-5 are in Copy Wood:

1. GPS: SD74866 33424, 80m asl. Two photos taken stood by a bench in between a fork in the footpaths looking West and East.

Canopy dominated by: Beech, Goat Willow, Aspen, birch, Ash, Alder and Wild Cherry.

Understorey: Wild Cherry, Aspen, Rowan, Hawthorn and Hazel.

Field layer locally dominated by: Nettle, Hogweed and Wood Avens. Other flora included Cow Parsley, Wood Dock, Meadow Crane's-bill and Hedge Woundwort.



Left: Stop 1 photo 1 of 2. Right: Stop 1 photo 2 of 2, 29/05/19.

2. GPS: SD74709 33425, 75m asl. One photo taken stood with back to the South-west corner of Copy Wood, looking NE.

Canopy dominated by: Alder, Ash, Beech and birch.

Understorey: Hawthorn, Hazel, oak, Aspen and Rowan.

Field layer locally dominated by: Raspberry with Male-fern, Nettle, Cleavers, Reed Canary-grass, Wood Avens, Cowslip and Wood Dock. Other flora included Cowslip.



Stop 2 photo 1 of 1, 29/05/19.

3. GPS: SD74695 33505, 95m asl. Two photos taken stood with back to a post and 6 strand wire fence with a pile of bricks on the other side looking both ways along the fence line.

Canopy dominated by: Goat Willow and Ash.

Understorey: Hawthorn, Hazel and Goat Willow.

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Field layer locally dominated by: Wood Avens. Other flora included Male-fern, Herb Robert, Creeping Cinquefoil, Rosebay Willowherb, Nettle, Lords-and-Ladies, Bush Vetch and Bramble.



Left: Stop 3 photo 1 of 2. Right: Stop 3 photo 2 of 2, 29/05/19.

4. GPS: SD74774 33538, 78m asl. Two photos taken stood next to the 2nd of two Sycamore trees on a ridge of bricks colonised by bryophytes.
Canopy dominated by: Goat Willow and Sycamore.
Understorey: Hawthorn, Dog-rose and apple.
Field layer locally dominated by: Bryophytes and Brambles with Nettle, Lords-and-Ladies, Hogweed, Wood Avens, Figwort, Male-fern and Tufted Hair-grass.



Left: Stop 4 photo 1 of 2. Right: Stop 4 photo 2 of 2, 29/05/19.

5. GPS: SD74820 33468, 90m asl. Four photos taken stood on a ridge of higher ground (tipped materials) close to a depression with willows on the other side and with a patch of Japanese Knotweed behind.
Canopy dominated by: Goat Willow.
Understorey: Hawthorn, Hazel and Elder.
Field layer locally dominated by: Nettle, Tufted Hair-grass and bryophytes. Other flora includes Bush Vetch, Male-fern, Broad Buckler-fern, Soft-rush, willow herb sp., Rough Meadow-grass, Creeping Buttercup, Field Horsetail, Wood Dock and Bramble.

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Above left: Stop 5 photo 1 of 4. Above right: Stop 5 photo 2 of 4, 29/05/19.
Below left: Stop 5 photo 3 of 4, 29/05/19. Below right: Stop 5 photo 4 of 4, 29/05/19.



Stops 6-10 are in Martholme Railway Woodland:

6. GPS: SD75080 33620, 78m asl. Three photos taken stood on the embankment the footpath (west of it) and a steep drop to the west, opposite a T-shaped drain on the opposite side of the footpath.
Canopy dominated by: Goat Willow and Ash.
Understorey: Prunus sp., Elder, Hawthorn, oak and Garden Privet.
Field layer locally dominated by: Nettle and Cleavers with encroaching Himalayan Balsam. Other flora included Hogweed, Wood Avens and Bramble.



Above left: Stop 6 photo 1 of 3. Above right: Stop 6 photo 2 of 3, 29/05/19.
Below: Stop 6 photo 3 of 3, 29/05/19.

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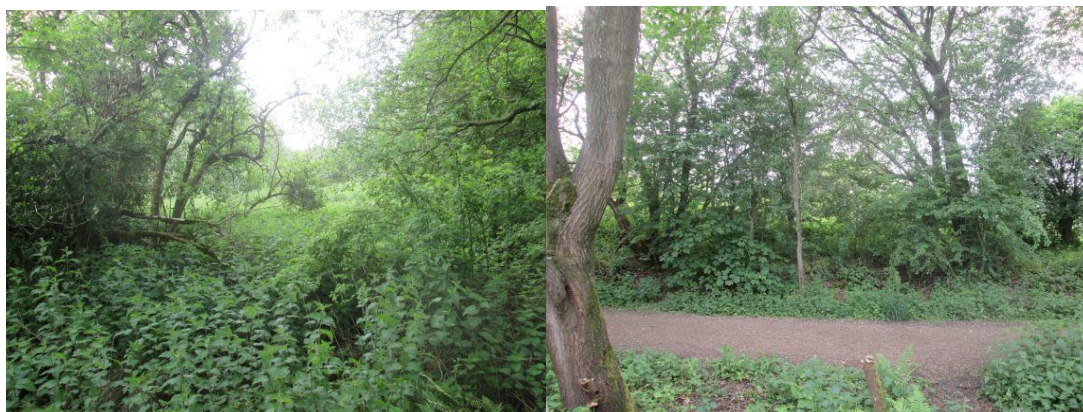


7. GPS: SD75086 33723, 78m asl. Two photos taken stood on the embankment the footpath (east of it) and a steep drop to the east close to where the line widens and with a farm and caravans visible below.

Canopy dominated by: Goat Willow.

Understorey: Dog-rose, Hawthorn and Elder.

Field layer locally dominated by: Nettle, Himalayan Balsam, Cleavers and Wood Avens. Other flora included Bramble, Wood Dock, Broad-leaved Willowherb, Male-fern. Marsh Thistle and Burdock.



Left: Stop 7 photo 1 of 2. Right: Stop 7 photo 2 of 2, 29/05/19.

8. GPS: SD75063 33519, 80m asl. One photo taken stood with back to a twin-forked birch tree (photo taken of it) on the embankment between the footpath (west of it) and a steep drop to the west.

Canopy dominated by: Goat Willow and birch.

Understorey: Grey Willow, Hazel and Hawthorn.

Field layer locally dominated by: Bramble and Nettle. Other flora included Wood Avens, Male-fern and Broad Buckler-fern.

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Left: Stop 8 photo of birch tree. Right: Stop 8 photo 1 of 1, 29/05/19.

9. GPS: SD75072 33430, 71m asl. Three photos taken stood on the embankment opposite the footpath that leads to Copy Wood, and adjacent to a path coming in from the wider area of woodland to the northeast.

Canopy dominated by: Goat Willow, Alder and Ash.

Understorey: Grey Willow, Hawthorn and Hazel.

Field layer locally dominated by: Nettle and bare ground. Other flora included Hogweed, Wood Avens, Male-fern, Cleavers, Bramble, Wood Dock and Reed Canary-grass.



Above left: Stop 9 photo 1 of 3. Above right: Stop 9 photo 2 of 3, 29/05/19.

Below: Stop 9 photo 3 of 3, 29/05/19.



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10. GPS: SD75059 33322, 73m asl. Four photos taken stood close to a birch tree (see photo) on the embankment the footpath (east of it) and a steep drop to the east where a wider section of woodland returns to the dry stone wall (see photo).

Canopy dominated by: Goa Willow, birch and oak.

Understorey: Hazel, Hawthorn and Elder.

Field layer locally dominated by: bare ground with Nettle, Bluebell, Bramble, Wood Avens, Enchanter's-nightshade and Male-fern.



Above left: Stop 10 photo 1 of 4. Above right: Stop 10 photo 2 of 4, 29/05/19.
Below left: Stop 10 photo 3 of 4, 29/05/19. Below right: Stop 10 photo 4 of 4, 29/05/19.



Of the 100 points available from the ten stops in May 2019, the woodland at Martholme Greenway scored 77 Yes's and 23 No's, i.e. $77/100 = 77\%$. This can be broken down into 40 points from Copy Wood (Stops 1-5), i.e. 80% and 37 points from the Martholme Railway Woodland (Stops 6-10), i.e. 74%.

For comparison, the other sites assessed in Hyndburn in May 2019 are as follows:

- Whinney Hill No. 2 (West – Pond End) scored 88%,
- Huncoat No. 1 (West) scored 81%,
- Whinney Hill No. 1 (East – Cricket Club End) scored 80%,
- Huncoat No. 2 (East) scored 70%,
- Abbott Clough scored 66%,
- Warcocks Green scored 66%, and
- Rushton Green Farm scored 63%.

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The average for the sites assessed in Hyndburn in May 2019 is 73.9%, hence with 77%, Martholme Greenway scored significantly more than the Hyndburn average.

For an additional comparison, other woodland condition assessments in Hyndburn have been as follows:

- Oak-birch woodland above Arden Hall scored 86% in 2018,
- Ash Plantation below The Coppice scored 86% in 2018,
- Arden Hall Plantation scored 80% in 2018,
- Hollins Wood scored 80% in 2018,
- Priestley Clough scored 75% in 2018,
- Foxhill Bank in Oswaldtwistle scored 74% in 2008,
- Rothwell Heights scored 74% in 2018,
- Plantation House scored 67.5% in 2018,
- Ooze Castle & Rock Haugh Clough Ancient Woodland scored 67% in 2009, and
- Park View Forest School woodland scored 60% in 2018.

The average score for the 18 woodlands assessed in Hyndburn to date is just under 75.5%, hence with 77%, Martholme Greenway scored slightly more than the average in Hyndburn, and is the 8th highest (11th lowest) scoring woodland assessed in Hyndburn to date.

The negative points at Martholme Greenway can be addressed through management by, for example;

2. Allow trees to become mature and over-mature (7 points in the long-term).
4. Thin canopy to let more light in (1 point in the short-term).
7. Plant trees, protect natural regeneration &/or thin canopy to let more light in (6 points in the short to medium-term).
8. Remove Garden Privet (1 point in the short-term).
9. Reduce number of Sycamore. Control regeneration (4 points in the short to medium-term).
10. Eradicate Japanese Knotweed asap. Control Himalayan Balsam (ongoing). Control any additional non-native species that may arrive in the future, e.g. Spanish Bluebell/hybrids. (4 points in the short-term, but control of Balsam will be ongoing).

Risk assessment: Steep &/or slippery slopes, trip hazards, watercourses/waterbodies (specify), culverts, mine shafts/adits, wet/boggy areas, hung-up trees, thorny bushes (Blackthorn, Dog-rose, Hawthorn, Holly etc), rocks, scree, quarry faces, internal fencing/barbed wire etc.